multicast traffic, as the destination cannot communicate with the source in a unidirectional IP multicast system that uses satellite transmission. The prior art one-way communication prevents selective IP multicast transmission. Another prior art approach requires a "hard join" where the server is forced to transmit data over a unidirectional link without a request.

Paragraph bridging pages 4-5:

Additionally, another method of configuring IP multicast communication is also provided, comprising the steps of (a) requesting the IP multicast communication from a client in one of a plurality of downstream networks to an upstream network via a corresponding bidirectional return channel, (b) encoding a live media stream in the IP multicast communication and transmitting the IP multicast communication generated at the upstream network to the at least one downstream network via a unidirectional satellite that operates independently of the corresponding return channel, the transmission of the live media occurring in real-time without being stored at the destination prior to receipt by the client, and (c) the upstream network receiving a confirmation of receipt of the IP multicast communication from the client via the return channel in response to a confirmation request transmitted from the upstream network to the downstream network. The method further comprises (d) recording a receiving time when the at least one client begins to receive the IP multicast communication, (e) recording a termination time when the at least one client terminates reception of the IP multicast communication, and (f) generating a bill for the IP multicast communication in accordance with the receiving time and the termination time, wherein at least one of steps (d) and (e) is performed at the upstream network via the return channel and the return channel comprises the Internet.